

Message Text

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USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

EMBASSY WARSAW 3551

CINCEUR

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18412

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS AND MFA OFFICIAL ON MBFR, NATO MANEUVERS

1. SUMMARY. A SIGNED IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY DECEMBER 23
CLAIMS THAT NATO'S STANDARDIZATION PROGRAM IS IN REALITY
A NEW ROUND IN THE ARMS RACE; THAT IT SHOWS NATO
UNWILLINGNESS TO MOVE TOWARD ARMS REDUCTIONS; AND THAT
THE TENDENCY EXEMPLIFIED BY SUCH PROGRAMS "CREATES CERTAIN
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DIFFICULTIES" FOR MBFR. OUR OWN CONTACTS WITH MFA OFFICIALS

INDICATE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT YET WILLING TO GO BEYOND KHLESTOV'S STATEMENT IN VIENNA ON REACTION TO THE OPTION III PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

2. THE IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY, SIGNED BY S. ZYKOV, CONTENDS THAT STANDARDIZATION PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN TRIED IN THE PAST IN NATO, AND THAT IN EACH CASE THEY HAVE UNAVOIDABLY LED TO AN INCREASE IN ARMS SPENDING BY THE NATO STATES. ZYKOV PORTRAYS THE WESTERN EUROPEANS AS ORIGINALLY BEING CAUTIOUS ABOUT STANDARDIZATION, REALIZING THAT IT IS THE U.S. (AND ITS MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX) THAT STANDS TO GAIN MOST FROM THE PROGRAM. NOW, HOWEVER, THE WESTERN EUROPEANS HAVE ALSO BECOME DEVELOPED ARMS PRODUCERS, AND THEY ARE BECOMING MORE INTERESTED IN THEIR SLICE OF THE PIE.

3. CONTINUING RECENT SOVIET PREOCCUPATION WITH FRENCH/ NATO RELATIONS, ZYKOV ALSO NOTES BRIEFLY THAT "PARIS HAS IN PRINCIPLE AGREED TO JOIN (THE ARMS PROCUREMENT AGENCY) DESPITE PROTESTS FROM FRENCH SOCIETY." ZYKOV CONCLUDES THAT THE RECENT NATO SESSION "DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NATO BOSSES HAVE NO INTENTION OF PROCEEDING DOWN THE PATH TO ARMS REDUCTIONS..." 'STANDARDIZATION' IS IN ESSENCE IS FORCING A NEW ROUND IN THE ARMS RACE. THIS TENDENCY IS NOT ONLY NOT COMPATIBLE WITH DETENTE, IT ALSO CREATES CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES FOR PRACTICAL STEPS IN THE REDUCTION OF ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WHICH IS BEING DEMANDED BY THE PEOPLES OF EUROPE."

4. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA DECEMBER 24, IN A LENGTHY COMMENTARY ON "NATO IDEOLOGICAL WARFARE" AGAINST THE WARSAW PACT STATES, SPELLS OUT IN STANDARD TERMS THE NEED FOR IDEOLOGICAL VIGILANCE AGAINST WESTERN MACHINATIONS. IT ALSO SAYS THAT THIS WESTERN IDEOLOGICAL OFFENSIVE "SERVES ALSO AS THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH THE NATO MILITARY MANEUVERS AND EXERCISES TOOK PLACE EVEN AFTER THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE."

5. COMMENT: ZYKOV'S LINKAGE OF STANDARDIZATION, AS ANOTHER CONFIDENTIAL

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MANIFESTATION OF NATO AGGRESSIVE TENDENCIES, TO LACK OF PROGRESS IN MBFR IS A NEW WRINKLE, BUT NOT NECESSARILY A NEW THEME. THE ZYKOV PIECE IS FAIRLY ABRASIVE IN TONE, AND IS IN THAT RESPECT A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF MUCH OF THE PRESS'S PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THE WEST IN RECENT WEEKS.

6. EMBOFF SPOKE BRIEFLY DECEMBER 24 TO RESPONSIBLE MFA OFFICIAL (BORIS KRASULIN IN THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANI-

ZATIONS DIVISION) ON THE SOVIET REACTION TO OPTION III.
KRASULIN SAID THAT HE SIMPLY WAS NOT YET ABLE TO SAY
ANYTHING BEYOND THAT ALREADY SAID BY KHLESTOV IN VIENNA.
HE SAID THAT THE PROPOSAL IS BEING STUDIED, BUT THAT
SINCE THE MILITARY HAS AN INPUT IN THE DECISION, NO
OFFICIAL POSITION HAS YET BEEN AGREED UPON. HE VENTURED
ONLY THAT HE PERSONALLY SAW TWO WEAKNESSES IN THE PRO-
POSAL: IT MAKES NO PROVISION FOR SIMILAR WEAPONS REDUC-
TIONS BY NON-US NATO PARTICIPANTS, AND IS A ONE TIME
MEASURE ONLY, WHICH WILL NOT ACCOMPLISH THE 15 0/0 OVERALL
CUT THE SOVIET UNION IS HOPING FOR. HE SAID THAT THESE
WERE AMONG THE REASONS WHY KHLESTOV'S INITIAL APPRAISAL
OF THE PROPOSAL IN VIENNA "HAD NOT BEEN VERY POSITIVE."
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